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EDITORIAL

On the clock

Budget cuts to be big nemesis for Smith

L. Dennis Smith officially takes over as president of the University of Nebraska today. He assumes control of a university system ready for leadership and direction.

Smith will have many lessons to learn about Nebraska in his first months in Lincoln. One of the most important is about the visibility of his new position.

Smith avoided publicity in the months after his selection as president. His desire to stay out of the limelight is understandable, but it will not work in Nebraska.

Things may have been different in a large state like California where Smith worked as an administrator at the University of California-Irvine. The University of Nebraska is the major institution in this state. As the president of the NU system, Smith must daily be the spokesman for the university.

Smith takes over as president at a time when NU has been struggling to deal with budget cuts and infighting among the colleges in the system.

As the NU Board of Regents' unanimous choice for the job, Smith has credibility and support as he begins. The people of Nebraska seem ready to work with him.

NU also should be receptive to his presidency. The chancellors at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, University of Nebraska Medical Center and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are relatively new. Smith will not have to work against old alliances. He should be able to forge strong ties with all the chancellors.

But it is no mistake that Smith's office is located in Lincoln. UNL is NU's flagship campus and is the focus of higher education efforts in the state. While it is important for Smith to be president of all NU colleges, he should not forget UNL is the strength of the university system.

Smith's most difficult challenge will be protecting NU from budget cuts that threaten the institution every budget year. Critical legislators have increasingly targeted NU for cuts when money becomes tight. Smith must steer NU on a "one university" course to protect it from cuts that can come when the university appears weak or divided.

Budgetary success or failure will be a significant measure of Smith's success as president. If he can protect NU from major reductions in funding, he will ensure that higher education can continue to prosper in Nebraska. If not, the quality of Nebraska's education — and Nebraska's future — will suffer.

Because Smith has been reluctant to discuss his plans as president before he assumed the office, no one really knows what he will do in the months and years ahead. Smith's intentions have so far been expressed only in broad generalities.

Now is the time for Smith to come forward and tell the state what he plans to do as NU president. He has had since November to consider his plans and, he should have some idea of what his priorities as president will be.

Previously, Smith declined to elaborate on his intentions, saying NU should only have one president at a time. But he is the president now, and now is the time for him to establish and announce goals for NU.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1994 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



CHRIS BANKS

Return to mistrust is not needed

The Cold War is over. The United States, as the chief banana, now has nothing to fear from other nations. Russia is a capitalist dynamo and our ally. The New World Order is a peaceful dream come true.

Well, maybe not. The Russians are on the road to free markets, but their economy resembles ours in the 1930s. No one can make anything because no one can afford to buy it. Crops rot in the fields because it costs too much to bring them to the cities. And the recent incident involving Aldrich Ames shows tension still exists between our two nations.

Ames was a CIA agent who was arrested last week for selling secrets to the Russians. According to the FBI, Ames was recruited by the KGB in 1985 and continued to work for the SVRR, Russia's new spy agency. During this time, he was allegedly paid over \$1.5 million for information on which Russian agents were recruited by the United States. There were reports that several of the agents were caught and killed.

I was shocked. How could someone trained by the government and tested for loyalty on a regular basis become a Soviet spy? His own father, Carleton Ames, was a CIA agent who was supposed to ferret out moles in the agency, though he never found one. It turns out that Aldrich Ames was not a very good agent.

The younger Ames was known in the CIA for his lackluster performance and arrogance. He blew his first big mission, which was to recruit agents in Turkey. After that, he was resigned mostly to pencil-pushing duty. Apparently, his \$70,000-a-year salary and desk job weren't enough.

The sad part of this case is that if Ames was spying, he wasn't doing it for ideological reasons — he was a red-blooded capitalist through and through. He did it for the money.

Sadder still, many Americans are shocked at this incident. They assumed that the Russians had stopped



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spying on us. Now many, including Kansas Senator Bob Dole, are asking for retaliatory measures against Russia.

The world of "spooks" is an exciting and dangerous one filled with double agents, secret messages, and switching loyalties. This has not changed. We still have agents in Russia and probably even in most countries that are our allies. Our government is always in search of a little extra intelligence, in times of peace and war. The Russians are no different.

I'm not trying to justify the actions of Aldrich Ames. He should be tried for his actions. However, we should not punish the country of Russia as a whole.

President Clinton urged Congress this weekend to stand against pressure to cut aid to Russia. Last year, the West pledged \$44 million to help the failing nation. Much of this money is for disarming missiles pointed at us, while most of the rest is to help the transition to capitalism.

This money is needed. An angry, armed Russia stuck in a depression is a much bigger threat to us than one that spies on us. Besides, as Russian Col. Gen Mikhail Kolesnikov said, there was no real damage done to the United States.

Ames purportedly exposed Russian turncoats to the Russians. While these men executed by the Russians sacrificed themselves for us, this is part of espionage. We can't afford to punish the entire nation for what our

spies do. Though it looks unlikely that we will cut aid, other measures have been taken already. We kicked Aleksander Lysenko, a "counselor" at the Russian embassy, out of the United States this weekend. He was reportedly the top Russian spy here. This follows the old Cold-War policy of tit-for-tat that we have been working to abandon. We do not need a return to those days.

It is unfortunate that we did not discover Ames' alleged activities sooner. All the signs were there. He paid cash for a \$540,000 house. He just bought a new Jaguar. Even the neighbors spoke of strange people visiting his house.

This falls in a long line of CIA bloopers. Several agents have been discovered in the past to be working for the enemy for 20 or 30 years. While it would clearly be difficult to catch a double agent immediately, we could have a better record. The United States needs to improve its own house-cleaning but should not be surprised that some of our spies have switched sides. That's the nature of the spy game — deception, deceit and misplaced trust.

The Russians should make a formal apology for the incident, and we should both move on. The Clinton administration should not succumb to fighting old demons now that the world is looking more peaceful. Neither country needs the other as an enemy.

Banks is a junior international affairs major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Propaganda

Today there is much propaganda against gay people being disseminated by fundamentalist religious and conservative groups. They portray gays as perverted, deviants and weirdos. They circulate videotapes that show extreme examples of homosexuals' behavior. They say gays are a threat to the nation's social and political order and use scare tactics to bring in donations.

It would be just as easy to review

the history of heterosexual conduct — the Roman orgies, gang rapes in Massachusetts, prostitution, Tailhook, the Hillside Strangler murders, etc. — and use these as examples to discredit all heterosexuals. If I stacked the deck and showed only the outrageous and offensive moments, I would be doing exactly what the critics of gays are doing.

There are millions of gay people in the United States. Most do not engage in flamboyant San Francisco-style displays of their identities. Rather, they

tend to avoid calling attention to themselves because of the penalties society imposes on them because of their difference.

It is not "perversion" when a gay person acts according to his or her nature. The perversion occurs when people force homosexuals to be heterosexual. The truth is that gays have been, and continue to be, oppressed into the unnatural lifestyle of pretending to be straight.

William Stosine
Iowa City, Iowa